

Commissioner John Geesman  
California Energy Commission  
1516 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

<b>DOCKET</b>	
04-IEP-1 K	
<b>DATE</b> _____	
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RE: 04 IEP 1K Committee Draft Document Hearings

Dear Commissioner Geesman:

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to comment on the draft 2005 Integrated Energy Policy Report (IEPR).

I am a wildlife biologist who, for a number of years, performed research at the University of California at Davis that explored the impacts of wind turbines on wildlife.

Wind energy is typically seen as an attractive energy-alternative because it is renewable and produces zero emissions. Yet my own research, and research from a variety of other scientists, has demonstrated that turbines in the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area (APWRA) can negatively affect wildlife. Most obviously, turbines have resulted in thousands of avian deaths as a result of birds flying into rapidly rotating turbine blades. However, turbines may also negatively impact resident wildlife via demonstrated behavioral shifts that do not result in immediate mortality.

While I do support the development of alternative energy sources like wind energy, I also believe that we must use sound science to understand the impacts of wind energy on local wildlife. In order to accomplish this task, it is essential that statewide protocols be developed and put into place that will allow us to effectively monitor turbine-related bird collisions and kills. Though the use of a variety of methodologies can add to our knowledge base on this issue, datasets that are collected using different methodologies, over different time frames, and in different locations are difficult to compare with one another. Consequently, previously obtained results are difficult to generalize and their scientific rigor can occasionally be questioned.

I applaud you and the California Energy Commission for recommending in the Draft IEPR that statewide metrics and methodologies be developed to further explore the impacts of turbines on wildlife. By developing such protocols for wind energy, scientists will be able to perform sound science that will allow decision makers to better understand and mitigate turbine impacts.

I also urge you to develop State Best Management Practices (BMPs) for wind energy that rely on the best available science. This will greatly help the California Energy Commission and wind energy companies to site, construct, and operate windfarms in a way that minimizes negative environmental impacts. BMPs and written guidance along

these lines have already been developed at a Federal level by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Because California is typically at the forefront of responsible environmental management, I urge you to do the same at the state level.

Respectfully submitted,

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